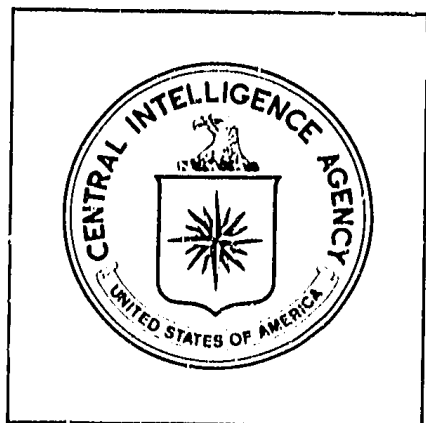


25X1

Approved For Release 2007/01/17 : CIA-RDP86T00608R000400040032-0

Approved For Release 2007/01/17 : CIA-RDP86T00608R000400040032-0

Secret

STAFF NOTES:

Middle East Africa South Asia

DIA review(s) completed.

Secret

139

No. 0837/75

August 4, 1975

25X1

Approved For Release 2007/01/17 : CIA-RDP86T00608R000400040032-0

Approved For Release 2007/01/17 : CIA-RDP86T00608R000400040032-0

MIDDLE EAST – AFRICA – SOUTH ASIA



25X1

CONTENTS

Nigeria: New Leaders Drawn from Second Echelon of Military	1
Mozambique: Soviet Rebuff	5

Aug 4, 1975

SECRETNigeria*New Leaders Drawn from
Second Echelon of Military*

Nigeria's new military leaders appear to have moved against former chief of state Gowon out of a common conviction that Nigeria needed a more activist government and that Gowon and his senior associates had enjoyed the fruits of military rule for too long. The new team is drawn largely from the second echelon of the country's military establishment.

The new Supreme Military Council includes 22 military and police officers. It appears to be balanced among Muslims from the north, Yorubas from the west, and minority tribes, as the Gowon-era leaders were. Although it is hard to say who holds power, right now four individuals for the moment are in positions of great influence.

Brigadier Murtala Mohammed

Murtala Mohammed is Nigeria's new chief of state and head of the armed forces, but his role in Tuesday's coup and the degree of power he now wields are not yet clear. Born in 1938 in Kano, he is a Muslim from the Hausa tribe, northern Nigeria's largest ethnic group.

In the Gowon regime, he was commissioner of communications and head of the army signal corps, one of the army's most professional and effective units. During the Biafra war, he was relieved as a division commander because of his poor showing.

Mohammed has been described as a cold, ruthless nationalist, intelligent and strong-willed. In his public pronouncements so far, he has given the impression of being in charge and determined to take the tough measures his fellow officers want to cope with Nigeria's problems.

(Continued)

Aug 4, 1975

1

SECRET

SECRET

25X6

If he is to gain broad acceptance by the military and the country, Mohammed will have to shed his reputation for putting northern over national interests. He made a gesture in this direction in his first speech after the coup, when he scrapped the controversial 1973 census figures. The 1973 figures, which indicated that nearly two thirds of Nigeria's population resided in the six northern states, have been a hot political issue and were bitterly contested by southern tribes.

The accession of Mohammed to power will be of concern to the Ibos of eastern Nigeria, who remember him as one of the most hawkish northern officers toward the Biafran secessionists. Today there are 63 Ibo officers in the army, and none appears to have been given an important post in the new regime.

Although a Muslim, Mohammed is not expected to advocate an avowedly pro-Arab stance in Nigeria's foreign relations. Such a course of action would only make Nigeria's non-Muslim minority more fearful of northern domination.

Mohammed's attitude toward the US is unknown. In the past he has espoused a strong line on southern African issues; this attitude could lead to increased criticism of the US for its policy toward Rhodesia and South Africa.

Brigadier Olusegun Obasanjo

His position as the new chief of staff at supreme headquarters makes Brigadier Olusegun Obasanjo the number-two man in the hierarchy. He is a 38-year-old Catholic born in western Nigeria and a Yoruba tribesman.

(Continued)

Aug 4, 1975

2

SECRET

SECRET

Formerly commissioner of works and housing and head of the army engineers, he is one of the most respected Yoruba officers. During the civil war, Obasanjo was considered an effective and popular division commander and was known as a strict disciplinarian. He is considered personally honest.

Obasanjo has recently shown a penchant for impulsive actions. He took it upon himself last month to order troops to surround the US embassy annex in Lagos. He and others were trying to get the US to vacate the building at once; it is scheduled to be turned over to the Nigerian government next year.

Obasanjo is known to have strong views on southern Africa.

Brigadier Theophilus Danjuma

The army's third-ranking position is in the hands of a minority tribesman, Brigadier Theophilus Danjuma, the 37-year-old former commander of the Third Infantry Division. He is a Christian from the Junkun tribe.

Officers from other small tribes held substantial power in the Gowon government and they will look to Danjuma to protect their interests in the new regime.

The US defense attache views Danjuma, who is relatively idealistic and thought to be incorruptible, as perhaps the council's most able member. He is pro-Western in outlook.

Like Mohammed, Danjuma was a key figure in the July 1966 coup. He was considered by many to have been an excellent combat officer during the civil war.

Mohammadu Yusufu

Mohammadu Yusufu, Nigeria's new chief of police, may wield important power in the new government. The ex-head of the police special branch, he is a Fulani Muslim born in 1931.

(Continued)

Aug 4, 1975

3

SECRET

~~SECRET~~

After the 1966 coup, he reportedly played a key part in persuading northern leaders not to secede. In 1967, he was instrumental in getting the northerners to accept the division of Nigeria into 12 states, a measure that established a better political balance among the country's competing regional and tribal interests. [REDACTED]

25X1

[REDACTED]

25X1

Aug 4, 1975

4

~~SECRET~~

SECRETMozambique*Soviet Rebuff*

Moscow's ardor for newly independent Mozambique seems to be cooling. The Soviets reportedly turned down recent Mozambican requests for Soviet doctors and harbor pilots. [REDACTED]

25X1
25X1

In particular, the Soviets may be annoyed by the \$56-million aid agreement signed July 2 by Mozambique and China; especially since the reported Soviet failure this spring to reach an accord providing the Soviet navy access to Mozambican port facilities.

The Soviets do not want to become embroiled in a costly rivalry with Peking, and they recognize that Mozambique will try to balance relations between the two communist nations. As a result, the Soviets are likely to continue to keep open their military assistance channels and to maintain more or less friendly diplomatic relations. [REDACTED]

25X1

25X1

Aug 4, 1975

5

SECRET